

Amendments to the Specification:

The paragraph starting at page 2, line 6, is amended and now reads as follows:

-- A holding device of the kind referred to above is disclosed, for example, in ~~German patent publication 4,413,920~~ United States Patent 5,608,574. There, a protective covering for a surgical microscope is described wherein a holding device in the form of an insert in the protective covering is provided. This insert has a radial flange extending outwardly. This flange is glued to the protective covering and is enclosed by an edge of a viewing opening. The flange has a circularly-shaped recess having several ribs at its inner wall which extend in a longitudinal direction. The inner diameter of the flange is adapted to the outer diameter of a surgical microscope main objective. The flange can be pushed onto a main objective of a surgical microscope in order to hold friction-tight on the outer wall of the main objective under the clamping action of the ribs. At its lower side, the holding device is cut at an angle and there has a receptacle for a transparent cover element which protects the surgical microscope main objective against contamination and makes possible also the sterile work with the surgical microscope. --

The paragraph starting at page 9, line 5, is amended and now reads as follows:

-- FIG. 2 shows the surgical microscope portion 100 having a protective covering 101 and a holding device 103 without a cover element. Insofar as FIG. 2 shows the same components as FIG. 1, the same reference numerals are used hereinafter. The surgical microscope main objective 104 projects with a cylindrically-shaped surgical microscope main objective flange 201 from the base body 202 of the surgical microscope. The holding device 103 with a central recess 203 is pushed on this cylindrically-shaped surgical microscope main objective flange 201 up to stops 204 on an end face region 205 of the surgical microscope main objective flange 201. The protective covering 101 is held on the outer ~~wall~~ flange 102 of the holding device 103 preferably with a weld connection or an adhesive connection. --